

*339<sup>th</sup>*



# Fighter Group Association

Station F378 – Fowlmere, England

## NEWSLETTER

“The Lads from Fowlmere”



Volume 25, Issue 4

Editor: Stephen C. Ananian

# A PATRIOT!

## Col. James Roy Starnes

By Stephen Ananian, *pilot, 505<sup>th</sup> FS*



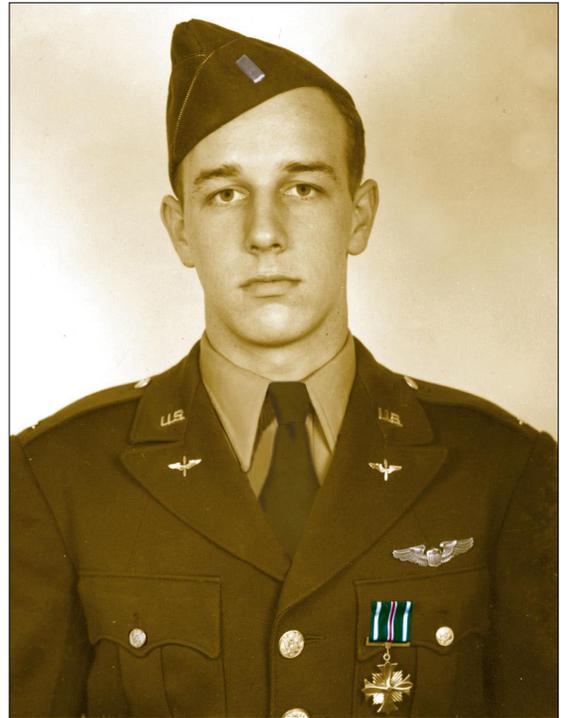
Jim Starnes was one of the “Original Cadre” of the 339<sup>th</sup> FG. - He came overseas with the group from Rice Field in California and flew combat with the 339<sup>th</sup> on its’ very first mission. Our treasurer, Richard Thieme recalls being taught combat flying tactics and flying training missions with Jim when Dick arrived at Fowlmere as a replacement pilot. I myself flew missions where Jim led the group as “Armstrong”. I recall flying some pretty “hairy” combat flights but Jim always got us through. He made it seem like it was a piece of cake! Jim was admired and respected by all.

“When Jim Starnes spoke - everyone listened!”

A little over 26 years ago, Jim was one of those instrumental in organizing the 339<sup>th</sup> Fighter Group Association. He was the Secretary of our association and the editor of our newsletter for over twenty years, hand typing each page on his typewriter, without assistance of word processors, computers or modern technology, He assumed this time-consuming burden until his impaired eyesight finally forced him to give up the job. In spite of this disability, he still continues writing his column in our newsletter and assists me in its’ publication.

Jim helped arrange our reunions, making the nametags, supervising and registering the attendees! He is the motivating force behind our organization, our historian and a leader. For all these years he has kept us going as a group! Modest Jim has always refused to accept the credit he deserves and we have always respected his desires - -

*Continued next page*



1/Lt. Jim Starnes, shown here wearing his first Distinguished Flying Cross.

but we could wait no longer!

The time had come for our group to recognize his generous contributions to all of us and for the group to express its' gratitude. He has devoted his efforts to our organization and helped perpetuate the camaraderie that developed during the war.

Jim Starnes is one of my heroes! So much so that after the war when I read my children fairytales and bedtime stories I made Jim Starnes one of the characters! He would be the knight in a shining Mustang that saved the princess or the woodsman that came to Red Riding Hood's rescue and killed the Bad Wolf!

Years ago Jim purchased beautiful ceramic plates with a picture of a Mustang painted on it. It was a P-51 from our group flying across a brilliant blue sky! He donated these plates to our organization and originated the practice of rewarding individuals for their extraordinary contributions to our association by presenting them with that blue piece of china with a P-51 of the 503<sup>rd</sup> FS of the 339<sup>th</sup> FG on it. - Our "Blue Skies Award"! This year, at our banquet dinner we honored two of our members - Lee "Dutch" Eisenhart our guest speaker and Richard G. Thieme our treasurer with this award in gratitude for their contributions to our organization.

We wanted to honor our Jim Starnes as well - Giving him a plate that he donated was out of the question! Besides he is something special and we wanted his efforts on our behalf to be recognized in a special way. We wanted him to have something that was unique!

So we presented Jim with a "collector's item"! A plate made by the well-known Bradford Exchange. It has a



Commemorative Plate by the Bradford Exchange –  
"Home at Dusk" a painting by Robert Taylor. (Steve)

painting by famed aviation artist Robert Taylor - "Home at Dusk!" Now unobtainable, - It is a painting showing Jim Starnes, his good friend Archie Tower and other members of the group returning home at dusk. Flying into a golden sunset over East Anglia during the winter of '44.

How appropriate! We call it "The Golden Skies Award"!

You are special Jim! So to you and to you alone we present "The Golden Skies Award!"

We thank you for all you have done for us, for your 32 years of service to our country, - your sacrifices for our Nation and for the freedom that our families and we all enjoy!

Thank you James Roy Starnes, -

**Patriot!**

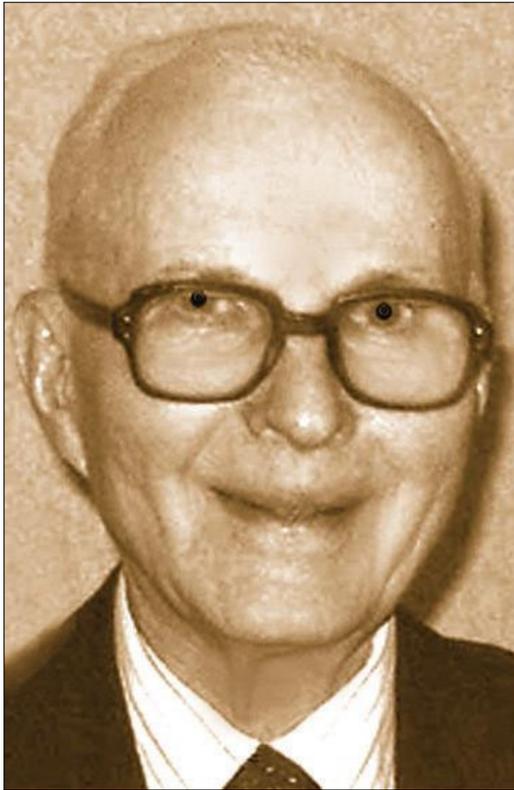
We owe you so much!



# A TIGER!

“Jim is incredible!”

by John B. Henry, Jr.



John B. Henry, CO 339<sup>th</sup> FGA

*Francis Gerard read the following words of praise from our absent CO, John Henry, at the banquet dinner.*

It is my distinct honor and great privilege to say a few words in recognition of Jim Starnes, the man whom we honor this evening - - the man whom all of us deeply respect and hold in the highest esteem over the past 25 years. No man has contributed as much to the success and viability of the 339<sup>th</sup> Fighter Group Association as has Jim Starnes.

He joined the Group at Rice Field as a 19-year-old fighter pilot and flew two combat tours plus an additional extension of fifty combat hours, throughout which he displayed abundant moral courage and uncommon valor. He was a Tiger and his combat record will clearly reflect that fact.

As our secretary over 20 years he was dedicated and unflinching in mastering all of the business matters and day to day demands that were always thrust upon him - - and there were many. He handled mail, Email and telephone calls from a myriad of sources and he dealt with each one personally without default or complaint on his part. -

And of course we know that our cherished Newsletter, which is far superior to that of any other like organization's publication - always arrived on time each quarter. Each one was as good or better than the last in content and Jim did that virtually alone.

To me Jim has always been an amazing man. I have alluded to his bravery in combat and his brilliant administrative ability. But the thing that astounds me the most is his encyclopedic store of information about events and people pertaining to the 339<sup>th</sup> Association. He can answer any question with instant recall and the answer was always accurate and complete. Never have I known a man with such a mental store of knowledge and the instant recall that he possesses. My only word for it is super human. He is incredible!

Jim, on behalf of all the members of this Association we extend our deepest gratitude, admiration and affection for all that you have done for us. You have been the catalyst that has made the 339<sup>th</sup> Fighter Group Association what it is today.

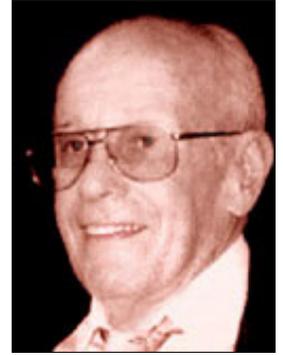
We shall never forget and may God bless you and yours.



*John Henry*

# From the Desk of Jim Starnes

By James R. Starnes, *Staff Columnist*



The Tampa reunion was a great success, and it is remarkable that we still have such fine turnouts after all these years. I thought we were to honor Dutch Eisenhart and hear about his experiences with the old 339<sup>th</sup> Bomb Grp. (Dive) here at Drew Field in 1943. Well, we heard about that, but I was blindsided with the decision to honor me at the banquet. It appears that many people were in on that, including my wife but no one leaked that information to me. Anyway, I was flattered and surprised to get an oval plate showing Robert Taylor's painting



**Jim and Helen Starnes at the 505th Unit Dinner. Helen did not tell!**  
(Cutri)

"Home at Dusk" with my 6N-X TAR HEEL and Archie Tower's 6N-D LUCKY BOY on it. I was unaware that such a plate had even existed. Steve Ananian has to be credited with locating that gem.

Among the attendees were Pete McMahon's daughter June Knaack and husband Chuck. Even more surprising was the participation by two nieces of ace Bob Ammon, Susan Gibbs and Louise Higbee. It takes a lot of courage for two ladies to come this far to attend something in which they had never met a single person before. My hat is off to Susan and Louise for honoring us with their presence. There are several things about Bob Ammon's career in the 503rd, which puzzle me. Bob scored his first aerial kill on 8 Jun 44 when he downed a FW-190 on the afternoon mission. Bob scored four more kills in two days in Sep 44 to become an ace, he then destroyed nine aircraft on the ground on 16 Apr 45. A total of 14 enemy aircraft destroyed, yet for all his successes he received no Distinguished Flying Cross, ending up with 23 Air Medals. To me that is a great injustice, but 60 years later there is little to be done about it. Bob later became a regular Air



**First time attendees June and Chuck Knaack. June is the daughter of 505<sup>th</sup> Pilot Peter McMahon KIA.**  
(Cutri)

Force officer and retired as a Lt Col in May 1967. He died of cancer in Oct 1973 before we



Also first time attendees L-R Susan Gibbs and Louise Higbee the nieces of deceased 503<sup>rd</sup> pilot Robert H. Ammon. (Cox)

were organized as an association. Just the same, we salute Robert H. Ammon, a great fighter pilot and contributor to our group's combat success.

Another person being honored at our Tampa banquet was our treasurer Dick Thieme. As anyone who reviews any of our treasurer reports can see, Dick's work is like that of a CPA. Not only did he get our "Blue Skies" plate award, he agreed to remain treasurer for an additional two years. We thank him for taking such great care of our financial matters.

During November we lost perhaps our oldest member, Tom Miller. Tom was crew chief on Joe Thury's P-51 and did an outstanding job of keeping the boss's airplane flying. He was ninety-seven years old and lived in a nursing home for the past few years, still a proud member of our association.



*Jim Starnes*

## 339<sup>th</sup> Fighter Group Board of Directors

*John B. Henry, Jr., Commanding Officer and HQ Director -*

**Thomas G. Sams**, President -

**Lawrence J. Powell**, Vice President and Reunion Coordinator -

**Stephen C. Ananian**, Secretary -

**Richard G. Thieme**, Treasurer -

**Charles Steffen**, 8th AFHS Unit Contact - **Warren L. Olsen**, Ordnance Dir. -

**Luther Francis**, 503rd Dir. - **William Clark, Jr.**, 504<sup>th</sup> Dir. -

**David Williams**, 505<sup>th</sup> Dir. -

**William Guyton**, **Chester Malarz**, **James R. Starnes**, Members Emeritus -

**Joyce Eiswald**, Hospitality Room Coordinator -

Newsletter Editor Stephen Ananian, - **phone** (864) 288-2599 -

**Email:** - [stephen.ananian@mindspring.com](mailto:stephen.ananian@mindspring.com)

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### HAVE YOU PAID YOUR DUES FOR THIS YEAR?

Your \$10 (tax-deductible) dues help cover the expense of this newsletter.

# I Am Honored!

## Passing the gavel.

By Enoch Bledsoe Stephenson,  
*President 339<sup>th</sup> FGA*



Pres. Enoch Stephenson

It has been a great honor and privilege to have served as your president for the last two years and I thank You very much for that opportunity.

Thanks to a diligent and capable board of directors, this association operates efficiently and in good order, enabling all of us to enjoy the rare friendships that were formed many years ago. I am confident that far into the future, this association will continue to thrive, even after the old heads have become unable to attend.

I am particularly sorry that I could not be there with you at our reunion in Tampa, to honor one of our founders - Jim Starnes to who we owe so much! We owe him our gratitude for his leadership, dedication and hard work for our organization.

I would be remiss if I didn't also acknowledge publicly the efforts of Stephen Ananian as our secretary and newsletter editor. It seems to me that he and his lovely wife Isabel spend the greater part of their time on the affairs of our association. To them we also owe a deep and sincere debt of gratitude for their dedication and hard work.

We look forward to continuing our association under the able guidance of our new president Thomas Sams and the newly elected Board of Directors.

I close by expressing to you my love and appreciation for all of you.

Cordially,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Enoch".

Enoch Bledsoe Stephenson, *President, 339<sup>th</sup> FGA*



## 339<sup>th</sup> Fighter Group Caps!

The Perfect Christmas gift! This finely tailored beige cap with the P-51 of the 339<sup>th</sup> FG flying over the American Flag embroidered on front! The Pat Gousie drawing on our lapel pins is embroidered with real silver thread! A dress cap made to sell for over \$30 retail. The price is \$17 each and includes shipping! Profits go to the 339<sup>th</sup> FGA. Just drop me a line with a check to the return address on this newsletter or fill out form on back page. 

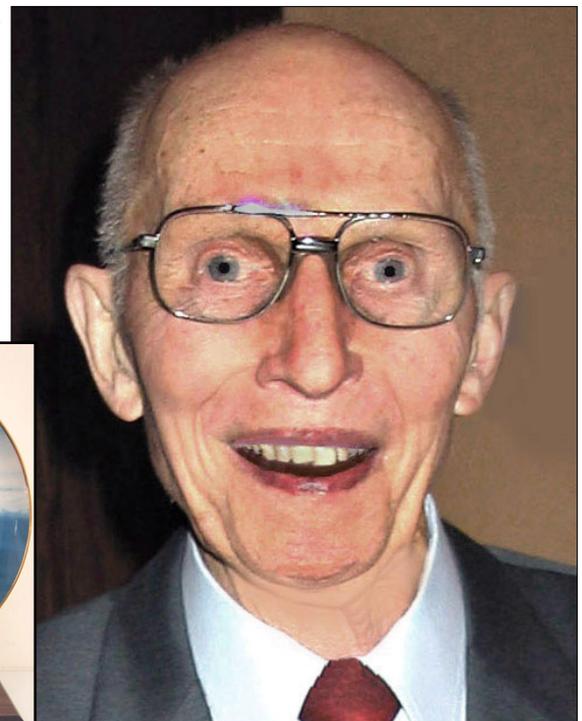
# THE GOLDEN SKIES AWARD!



Francis Gerard on the right presents Jim Starnes (left) with "Golden Skies Award". Your Editor looks on in the middle! (Puccio)

Jim Starnes seen here relaxing in our Hospitality Room at Tampa. (Cox)

# THE BLUE SKIES AWARD!



Richard Thieme, treasurer (left) and "Dutch" Eisenhart our Guest Speaker (right) were awarded the "Blue Skies" Award (center above), in grateful appreciation. (Puccio)

# REUNION SNAPSHOTS!



Laurina and John Harris our members from the UK.  
John is sporting his new Goatee! (Joe)



The youngest attendee baby Allison Clark, seen here in arms of mother Carolyn Clark. (Clark)



Fred Cox (Ord) drove from Texas around the ravages of Hurricanes "Rita" and "Katrina" to come to our reunion. At age 94 he is the oldest attendee! (Joe)

Photos - thanks to Bill Clark, Fred Cox, Gabe Cutri, Jeanne Joe and Cas Puccio.



John and Nancy Roach daughter of 505<sup>th</sup> pilot Tom Marvel (deceased) with son Kaning at 505<sup>th</sup> dinner. (Cutri)



# When you smile - -



Always smiling, Jeanne Mulquin, Assistant Red Cross Director seen here in the spring of 1945 at Cambridge. (Steve)

We all smile with you!



by Ronald Miller,  
505<sup>th</sup> Armorer

Aloha Jeanne,

I am at an age now where I think I have become a "Senior". Time seems to pass so quickly - I reach out to grasp a chunk of it in order to accomplish some of what I would like to do but it just rattles on past - "Hell bent for election," so to speak.

Well, - then I start reflecting on the past - and invariably wind up at Fowlmere.

For the pilots it was an exciting adventure - but for the ground crew, it was the drudgery of long hard hours just to keep those planes ready for flight.

Many would become depressed!

A man would enter the "Aero Club" (The Red Cross Recreation Center) with a frown that dragged clear to his ankles. The coffee wasn't that good - but then he would catch a glimpse of Jeanne Mulquin, - she would smile her warm friendly way and his spirit would soar to the high heavens.

It got to where many of those GIs would place her on a pedestal. - Some even revered her. She was a tremendous morale booster - a friend to everyone.

You know Jeanne, Today, I think if I were to see you tomorrow morning you would still have that friendly smile for everyone. And everyone would love you just for being yourself!

Aloha,



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## The latest roster of members is now available!

Those that came to the reunion received the latest roster for the year 2006 of our members! If you wish a copy, please drop your editor a line or use the form on the back page and I will be happy to mail it to you.

**Newsletter Circulation - 457, 427 - USA, 30 - Overseas**





# Editor's Corner

## We Did It Again!

By Stephen C. Ananian, pilot 505<sup>th</sup>



What is it that they say about Mohamed and the mountain?

"If Mohamed can not go to the mountain then the mountain will come to Mohamed"! - Not certain of the words, it's something like that.

Since its' inception Jim Starnes has never missed a Reunion of our Group. Due to health problems, he was unable to attend the last two. It just wasn't the same without him, so this year the reunion came to Tampa, to the home of Jim Starnes!

"The mountain had come to Mohammed!"

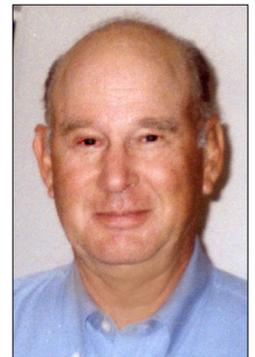
It wasn't easy! We picked the month of October for our reunion 'cause the "experts" said the hurricane season would be over by then and the rates would still be low. - As you know, they were wrong on both counts! First came hurricane Katrina followed by her sister Rita, they wiped out parts of Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and a piece of Florida.

Then the guardian angels of the 339<sup>th</sup> stepped in. We got a break in the weather! Our prayers had been answered! - Only a tropical storm named Wilma was roaming around off Mexico but Tampa and our reunion had great weather! Some of our key people were ailing and could not make it. Our CO John and lovely wife Maxine were unable to attend because Maxine was not well. Our president, Enoch Stephenson had to bow out, - he was having difficulty with his equilibrium - but 117 of our members did show up!

Fred Cox (Ord.) our oldest attendee (age 94) drove up from Texas going around the devastated flood areas of Louisiana and Mississippi (see photo on page 8). He arrived a day early and showed up at the banquet with his stepson and grandson. Francis Gerard was there with his "walker", lovely wife Adriana and nine members of their family! Dorothy Clark (HQ) and her family came with grandchildren and great grandchildren. Grandson Curtis with wife Carolyn and three children was there with the youngest attendee in arms, their baby Allison! Bob and Carol Burns (505) arrived on Saturday. Bob just back from a stay in the hospital the month before had to stop by and say hello to all of us.



David Williams



Bill Clark, Jr.

We had not seen Mike Placko (ORD) for some time but he dropped in with daughter Bonnie and her airline pilot husband "JC" Kalous. The list goes on and on. (See page 19).

The first day, Attendees went on a three hour guided tour of the city and rode the streetcars, visited Ybor City, ate Cuban food, watched the Flamenco Dancers at the Columbia Restaurant, visited the Aquarium and went shopping. On Saturday we had our annual

Membership Meeting and elected a new slate of officers. The members set history and selected two second-generation officers (a sign of things to come). Bill Clark, Jr. (son of our Group CO) will be 504<sup>th</sup> Unit Director and Dave Williams (son of Red Cross Director Mary Williams) will be the 505<sup>th</sup> Unit Director. We owe many thanks to Bill Jaaskelainen who entertained us in the Hospitality Room by showing us DVDs of old WWII home movies taken by members of the 339<sup>th</sup> in combat as well as in training stateside.

As always the Banquet dinner on Sunday topped it all! Our president Enoch Stephenson, unable to attend sent his greetings, which were read by our then VP Thomas Sams. Larry Powell was our Master of Ceremonies and Francis Gerard sat in for John Henry. Dutch Eisenhart a veteran of Drew Field was our guest speaker, he told us of his experiences during those early days when the 339<sup>th</sup> was a dive-bomber group and we flew A-24s. He told us of the difficulties we faced in those early days of the war.

As reported previously, we awarded two "Blue Sky Awards" this year. One to our guest speaker Dutch Eisenhart for his fine talk and the second to our hard working, treasurer Richard G. Thieme in grateful appreciation for his ongoing service to our organization. We then surprised Jim Starnes by honoring him for all he had done for our group! John Henry asked that Francis Gerard read his "Words of Praise" to Jim Starnes. Jim's crew chief, Gabe Cutri was unable to attend and requested that I read his message of gratitude. We then presented Jim with the "Gold Skies Award"! Jim, taken aback, thanked everyone and humbly accepted saying he had been "blindsided" by the members.

Bill Clark then sang us the ballad that he had written honoring John Henry as all joined in. As usual the evening closed with Carl Ashworth singing "God Bless America". This year Carl sang a duet with Ann, his new bride of nearly a year.

It was Janet McDonald and Nelson Eddie all over again!

Our special thanks to Hospitality Room Coordinator, Edward and Rita Epp, Jim Starnes, Dick Thieme, Larry Powell, Chet Malarz, Tom Sams, and Frank Gerard whose untiring efforts made this reunion the success that it was!

We left a little sad, as goodbyes always are but looking forward to seeing one another again next year in San Diego!

  
*Stephen C. Ananian*

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**Merry Christmas!**

**Happy Hanukkah!**

May we take this opportunity to wish all of you and your families good health and joy during this holiday season and for the coming year.

Your editor and the 339<sup>th</sup> Newsletter staff

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# "Those Early Days"



339<sup>th</sup> Curtiss Helldiver SB2C, "Son of a Bitch Second Class" – landing at Drew Field!

## From Marine Corps to Army Air Force Rear Gunner By Ron Miller, *armorers 505<sup>th</sup> FS*

Aloha Steve,

In the last Newsletter those pictures of the A-25 certainly brought to life again that time we flew that rugged workhorse of a plane. - It was a good machine but somewhat clumsy.

My main task was 505<sup>th</sup> Armament Chief, but was also duty directed as a "Gunner" in the rear cockpit of that A-25. It was a rather cramped space and instead of a gun turret our twin 50's was mounted onto a ring. So, without an interrupter system it became the "Gunner's" responsibility to avoid 'shooting off' our own tail. As you will notice the stabilizer and rudder were of enormous size and definitely in the way of gunnery firing.

Whenever possible I would stow the "50's" in the gun bay and face forward.

The rear cockpit was equipped with duplicate flying controls under the theory that should any wrong befall the pilot the "Gunner" could fly the plane to a landing. That theory



Ron at Fowlmere

was a real Ha-Ha because somehow they neglected to give the "Gunner" any flight training whatsoever.



Spencer Tracy

In order even to see the terrain below (hidden from view by the expansive wing area) the pilot would have to do a 45 - 90 degree roll. It was a sturdy plane but I think we were pleased to retire it in favor (later) of the P-39.

This was at Drew Field before you joined the outfit and even before Spencer Tracy made his movie right there on the premises.

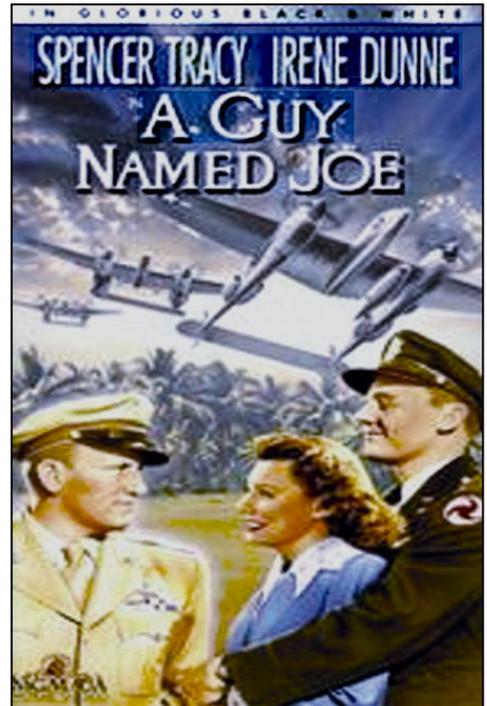
The movie was "A Guy Named Joe" and also starred Irene Dunne. When Tracy came there, of course all of the guys wanted to see him, but they only allowed officers to be around him. If I remember correctly he was there in the summer of 1943; however, Betty researched and found that the movie was not released until March 1944.

I remember how ridiculous it seemed that they imported 'scads' of fake palm trees for the film when we already had many, many natural palms already on hand. (They must have had a comfortable budget!!)

- - - When I wrote you about my relationship to the A-25, I neglected to mention the Vultee Vengeance, which replaced the A-25. It was a more efficient plane and I personally liked it better. However, it too, was a dive-bomber and, if I remember correctly, was somewhat of a 'gas hog'.

When our outfit was re-designated to a fighter mission rather than bomber we were issued the P-39 Airacobra which we kept until arriving in England where, at Fowlmere, we trained and fought in the P-51D.

Aloha,



### 339<sup>th</sup> Fighter Group Lapel Pins



Actual size!

This polished pewter four-colored Cloisonné lapel pin is a thing of beauty! Only  $\frac{7}{8}$ " in diameter it looks like a piece of fine jewelry. Great "stocking-stuffer" for Christmas! Only a few left! First come first serve! The price is \$10 each plus \$2 shipping per order. Profits go to the 339<sup>th</sup> FGA. Just drop me a line with a check to the return address on this newsletter and tell me how many pins you want.



## We mourn the loss - - -

### DECEASED

**James L. "Jim" Wells, Jr.**, Grp. - Base Communications Center Chief, passed away July 18, 2005. - J. Wells, (son)

**Leo M. Schmitz**, 504<sup>th</sup> Crew Chief, passed away July 30, 2005. - Ken Willard

**Frank Tropea**, 504<sup>th</sup> Crew Chief, passed away June 15, 2005. Frank and I had grown to be friends via the Internet and I will miss him. - S. Ananian

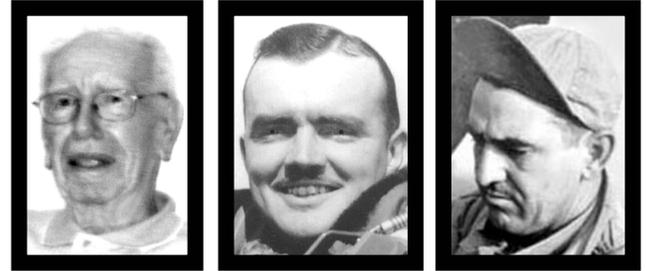
**Knighton, Ralph M.**, 505<sup>th</sup> Pilot, passed away Aug. 3, 2005. Ralph passed away in the VA hospital in Bay Pines, FL. - Bill Guyton

**Miller, Thomas H.**, 505<sup>th</sup> Col. Joe Thury's Crew Chief, passed away in his home on November 3, 2005 at the age of 97. He was always proud of his as well as his comrades' service in WWII and considered it an honor and a privilege to belong to such an elite group. His family misses him greatly.

- Stephen Lawrence (great-grand-nephew)



Our condolences to all the families - - -



James Wells - Ralph Knighton - Tom Miller

## The Mail Bag

Jim Wells sends us the following sad news: -

Mr. Ananian,

August 09, 2005

*It is with sadness that I let you know about the death of my Dad, James L. (Jim) Wells on Monday July 18th of injuries he received in a car wreck in Southern West Virginia. He had taken Mom out for a "Sunday ride" to allow her some freedom and a chance to get out of the house when he was broadsided by a truck at an unfamiliar intersection during a cloudburst. He sustained a torn aorta, but survived the helicopter flight to the hospital, was completely coherent and able to tell the doctors everything regarding my Mother's health and medications and survived for over 24 hours before succumbing quietly to his injuries. Mom sustained a broken nose and is with us at my hospital in the rehabilitation unit.*

*We miss Dad, but he lived a full life and was able to visit 49 of the 50 states, running out of time to see Alaska. He was proud of his time in the service and enjoyed the reunions so much. I thank God that I was able to accompany him for the last four and that the entire family (including Grandchildren) was able to be with him at the banquet last year in Washington. I wish the organization the best, will continue to send in my dues and look forward to sending a contribution to the group when the "paperwork" smoke clears a little. I have a large packet of pictures I would like to send you prior to the reunion this year which contain mostly pictures of Dad and some of the headquarters crew, but some show planes and*



*other officers. I don't have any scanning capabilities so I'll send the real thing, if any of them could be identified, I would appreciate the help. Anyone is free to copy the pictures. I wish you all the best and thank you on Dad's behalf (and Mom too- before she couldn't attend anymore) for the wonderful times he had at the reunions over the years.*

*Please prove him wrong on one point however. In our last conversation, we were making plans for Tampa and he said he was afraid this just might be the last one held.*

*All regards, Jim Wells, RPH*

Our condolences on your tragic loss Jim, we shall all miss him. Steve



The following Email came from the son of Ron Epstein, 505<sup>th</sup> crew chief: -

*Dear Mr. Ananian,*

*I read the note from Mrs. Mary Clapps about the passing of her husband Vito. I have several photos of Vito and my father to share with her. My father Ronald Epstein spoke frequently about Vito and their crew work. There were many good memories and some humorous stories.*

*One was of an infamous bike ride back to base after a "pub-night" in Fowlmere. With the wartime "blackout" it wasn't unusual to wind up off the road and sure enough - Dad followed Vito into a ditch bikes and all. He never said if it was the night or the local stout. Probably both.*

*I'm very sorry for the loss. He was a good friend to my father.*

*Sincerely, Sanford Adelman*



L-R Vito Clapps, Ron Epstein

Thanks for the pictures Sanford I am certain that Mary Clapps is grateful! SCA



I received the following Email from the nephew of Joe Thury: -

*Dear Sir,*

*July 21, 2005*

*I am the nephew of Lt. Col. Joseph L. Thury, Commander of the 505th F.S. of the 339th F.G. - - - I'm interested to learn about joining the 339<sup>th</sup> Association. I served with the 7th Air Force in Southeast Asia during the Vietnam War. I was with the 22nd Tactical Air Support Squadron (22nd TASS) at Bien Hoa A.F.B. in 1970. We flew O-1 and O-2 aircraft in support of ground forces. I was a sergeant in maintenance control and seriously wounded in a rocket attack on 11/17/1970. I'm also a life-member of the 8th Air Force Association. - - - Please email me more information on your upcoming reunion in Tampa, Florida.*

*Thank you. JOHN - John W. Miller*

*PS My cousin, Paul J. Thury, Jr., would also be interested about your association and the upcoming reunion. (Please see page 17 for the addresses)*

John we thank you for your service to our country and welcome you to our association. Both your names have been added to our list of members and as a member, you will receive the newsletter in the future. STEVE



*The Mail Bag is continued next page*

David Crow, 355<sup>th</sup> FG UK Association corrects my error in my Memorial Day article it should have read 359<sup>th</sup> FG not 355<sup>th</sup>! Sorry about that David! SCA



This note from our first time reunion attendee Louise Higbee, the niece of 503<sup>rd</sup> pilot Robert H. Ammon: -

Dear Steve,

Nov. 5, 2005

*My sister, Susie, and I thoroughly enjoyed ourselves meeting all of you at the 339th Reunion. We really had a wonderful time and I am already looking forward to next year in San Diego. I wish to thank you so very very much for the beautiful illustration you made for each of us about our Uncle Bob - Robert Ammon. Each time I look at it I think of all the wonderful and kind people we met in Tampa. I feel like I found a long-lost family again! If you talk to anyone, especially anyone from the 503<sup>rd</sup> please let them know we had so much fun meeting everyone and listening to everyone's stories. I loved being with all of you and can't wait to see you all again next year. I did receive a copy of the nice letter that Jim Starnes wrote to Susie and me. That was lovely of him to do so and to include more information about Uncle Bob. Please pass along my thanks to him*

With warmest regards, LOUISE, Louise E. Higbee

Louise the feeling is mutual and we all look forward to seeing you both! STEVE



Dr. Wes Stricker, son of our Group Flight Surgeon, Mustang pilot and owner sends this email: -

Hi Steve!

Sept. 26, 2005

*Sorry to bother you again, but I have a friend over here from England (and a fellow Mustang and Spitfire pilot), and he tells me the pub in Fowlmere was called "Checkers". Dad only mentioned it once in his book, but he called it the "Spitfire" pub. Which is correct??*

Regards, Wes

Wes the Pub in Fowlmere is called the Chequers and I think the name of a Pub called Spitfire sounds familiar to me but I cannot say so for certain. Can anyone out there help us out? STEVE



"The Chequers" – 2000 (Byrd)



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## HAVE YOU PAID YOUR DUES FOR 2005?

Your \$10 (tax-deductible) dues help cover the expense of this newsletter.

# Donations

We thank the following members for their generous donations: -

Dorothy Grogan \$20, Rachel Grandy \$40, William Raines \$25, John Wilson \$86, Marshall Cole \$20, John Withers \$50, Edith Brown \$20, Barbara Chenez \$70, Clarence Ferrell \$160, Roland Smith, Sr. \$25, Wilbur Kilmer \$21, Lee Eisenhart \$93, Harold Meyer \$50, Robert Burns \$80, Robert Frisch \$50, John B. Henry, Jr. \$120, Chet Malarz \$100, Patricia Patrick \$30, H. Miller Hartman \$50.



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# Roster Updates

Make the following changes to your new mailing list: -

**Change: - Roach, Nancy**, 505 - Daughter of pilot Tom Marvel, 6113 ROXBURY Ave., SPRINGFIELD, VA 22152-1623, John

**Carr, Mrs. Zola**, 505 - Widow of pilot Vernon, 33 Circuit Ave., Pocasset, MA 02559-2024

**Eisenhart, Lee, "Dutch"**, 504 - Pilot, 798 GOOSE POND Road, LAKE ARIEL, PA 18436

**Knapp, Jr., S/M Frank J.**, 504 - Son of pilot, PO Box 762686, San Antonio, TX 78245-7686

**Horst, Mrs. Ethel M.**, 503 - Sister of Ray Mayer, 9209 Macon Rd., Raleigh, NC 27613 (Changed house # to 9209)

**Penrose, Marcia**, 504 - Widow of pilot Richard, 135 NE Gerlinger Lane, Dallas, OR 97338

**MacKenzie, David A.**, 503 - Pilot, 7 VERNON Street, BRAINTREE, MA 02184-8115

**Wells, Richard G.**, 503 - Pilot, 129 Island Estates Parkway, Palm Coast, FL 32137

**Add: - Salgren, Woodrow K.**, 504<sup>th</sup> Armorer, 3503 NELLIE BLY Drive, LOUISVILLE, KY 40213

**Miller, John W.**, 505<sup>th</sup> Nephew of Joe Thury 505<sup>th</sup> CO, 3125 County Road N., Wilson, WI 54027

**Thury, Jr., Paul J.**, 505<sup>th</sup> - Nephew of 505<sup>th</sup> CO, 8884 Greenway Ave., S., Cottage Grove, MN 55016

**Gibbs, Susan A.**, 503<sup>rd</sup> - Niece of Robert Ammon pilot, 403 Fairview Street, Coopersburg, PA 18036

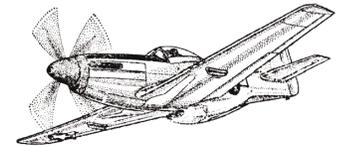
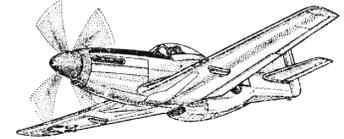
**Higbee, Louise E.**, 503<sup>rd</sup> - Niece of Robert Ammon pilot, 6788 Arthur Hills Drive, Gainesville, VA 20155

**Kleinheyer, Lt/Col Stefan**, 2./JG 73 "Steinhoff" Pilot German AF, Daimler-Benz Allee 2a, 18299 Laage, Germany

**French, Philip B.**, 503<sup>rd</sup> - Son of pilot Lloyd Jeff French, 830 River Hill Drive, Richmond, KY 40475, Rebecca

**Sawicki, Richard**, 505<sup>th</sup> Brother of pilot Joseph Sawicki KIA, 32 Side Cut Road, Redding, CT 06896-1206

**Delete:** -The following deceased members. **Schmitz, Leon M.**, 504<sup>th</sup> - **Tropea, Frank**, 504<sup>th</sup> - **Gertz, Earl**, HQ - **Gapinski, Aloysius V.**, ORD - **Knighton, Ralph M.**, 505<sup>th</sup>.



# Book Reviews

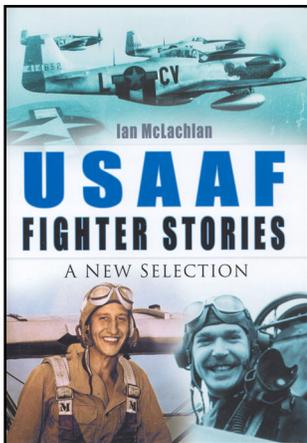
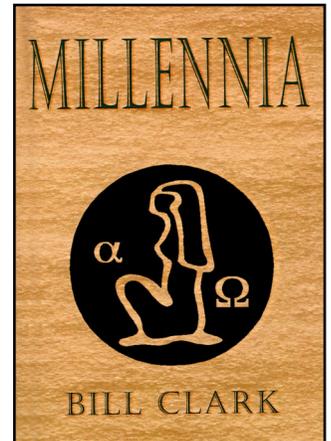
## Great Reading, Perfect Holiday Gifts!

**MILLENNIA**, By Bill Clark (339<sup>th</sup> FGA)

Our Bill Clark, Jr. delivers an exciting tale of courage and faith in the most extraordinary of circumstances.

The separation of church and state has never been as challenged as when a future U.S. president sets in motion the ultimate technological achievement: sending a human back in time to the age of Jesus. A poignant love story that transcends the ages and rings true with the events and characters that formed the beginnings of the Christian church in Roman Palestine and beyond.

**From Barnes and Noble, Amazon Books - Hard cover \$51.95**



## USAAF FIGHTER STORIES, A NEW SELECTION by Ian McLachlan

Ian McLachlan has spent many years researching a brand new collection of exciting USAAF fighter stories of the Second World War. In this new selection, of pilot's stories the author recounts the complete story of Frank Stilwell and Dennis Rawles of the 339<sup>th</sup> FG and their plane "The Bengal Lancer". This is one story that 339ers will not want to miss! **Hard Cover \$23 from Amazon books**

## The Window at St. Cathrine's

By John F. Dobbertin, Jr.

If the fates had been just a shade different, we might all be flying to and from Cullerton International instead of O'Hare International in Chicago.

This is the incredible story of Bill Cullerton, of the 355<sup>th</sup> Fighter Group a leading US Army Air Force ace in World War Two. A tale of salmon fishing, war, survival and friendship. The true story of The Window at St. Catherine's Church at Steeple Morden, England.

**From Barnes and Noble - Soft cover \$15.95**



December 1, 2005

# Reunion Attendees - - -

**Overseas Members**

Harris, John UK  
Harris, Laurina UK

**Stateside Members**

Ananian, Isabel 505  
Ananian, Steve 505  
Puccio, Cas 505  
Puccio, Valerie 505  
Puccio, John 505  
Puccio, Rick 505  
Puccio, Abby 505  
Puccio, Mike 505  
Puccio, Kate 505  
Puccio, Alexander 505  
Ashworth, Ann 505  
Ashworth, Carl 505  
Bellman, Karen 503  
Bellman, Ray 503  
Bellman, John R. 503  
Bellman, Matthew 505  
Bellman, Angie 505  
Bryan, Karen 503  
Bryan, 3<sup>rd</sup> Bill 503  
Bryan, Jr. Bill 503  
Burns, Carol 505  
Burns, Robert 505  
Clark, Curtis HQ  
Clark, Carolyn HQ  
Clark, Dorothy HQ  
Clark, Allison HQ  
Clark, Jordan HQ  
Clark, Nikolas HQ  
Clark, Sharon HQ  
Clark, William HQ  
Eiswald, Joyce HQ  
Cohen, Carol 504  
Poe, Joann Guest  
Cox, Fred Ord  
Carter, Ryan Ord  
Carter, Robert J. Ord  
Creswell, Ray 504  
Cutri, Gabe 505  
Cutri, Neva 505

**UK**  
Davidson, James 503  
Delisio, James 503  
Delisio, Ruth 503  
Eisenhart, Dutch 504  
Epp, Edward 504  
Epp, Rita 504  
Ferrell, Clarence 503  
Ferrell, Lance 503  
Ferrell, Randy 503  
Ferrell, Tim 503  
Frisch, Robert 503  
Gerard, Francis R 503  
Gerard, Dr. Adriana 503  
Gerard, David L. 503  
Gerard, Jeremy E 503  
Gerard, Daria A. 503  
Oronato, Michael 503  
Gerard, Donald F 503  
Hroncich, Margo 503  
Stolte, Aldo J. 503  
Grogan, Dorothy 504  
Gibbs, Susan 503  
Higbee, Louise 503  
*Susan & Louise - cousins of  
503<sup>rd</sup> pilot Robert Ammon*  
Jaaskelainen, John 505  
Jaaskelainen, Nancy 505  
Jaaskelainen, Norma 505  
Jaaskelainen, Jr., Bill 505  
Hutchens, Jill 505  
Zwiez, Lynn 505  
Belfry, Scott 505  
Joe, Dennis 503  
Joe, George 503  
Joe, Jean 503  
Placko, Mike Ord  
Kalous, Bonnie Ord  
Kalous, J. C. Ord  
Knaack, Chuck 505  
Knaack, June 505  
*June is the daughter of  
505<sup>th</sup> pilot Peter McMahan*  
MacClarence, William 505

Malarz, Chet 505  
Malarz, Mary 505  
Mankie, Andrew 503  
Mankie, Jeff 503  
Miller, "Red" 503  
Miller, Francis 505  
Moore, Bill 505  
Murray, John 505  
Murray, Patrick 505  
Olander, Don 505  
Olander, Shirley 505  
Olsen, Gladys Ord  
Olsen, Warren Ord  
Poutre, Rex 503  
Powell, Larry 505  
Raines, Bill 505  
Raines, Teddy 505  
Roach, John 505  
Roach, Kaning 505  
Roach, Nancy 505  
*Nancy is the daughter of  
505<sup>th</sup> pilot Tom Marvel*  
Sams, Gloria 503  
Sams, Thomas 503  
Salsberry, Carolyn 504  
Parr, Joanne M. 504  
*Carolyn & Joanne daughter of  
504<sup>th</sup> pilot Carroll Bennett*  
Starnes, Helen 505  
Starnes, Jim 505  
Swinand, Frank 505  
Swinand, Sunny 505  
Thieme, Dick 505  
Thieme, Emma 505  
Weinhold, Gary 504  
Weinhold, Lee 504  
White, Carol 505  
White, Tom 505  
Williams, David RC  
Woolery, Pepper 505

**Total Attendees 117**



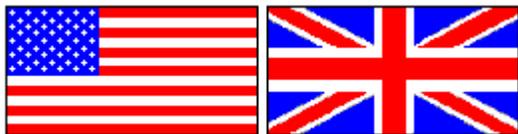
December 1, 2005

**339<sup>th</sup> Fighter Group Association, Inc.**

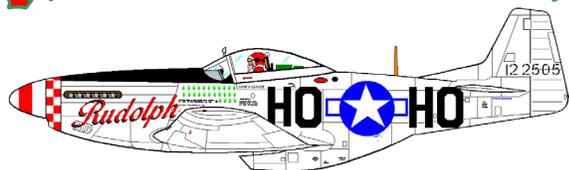
C/o Stephen C. Ananian  
4 North Orchard Farms Avenue  
Simpsonville, SC 29681-4866, USA



US  
POSTAGE



*Season's Greetings*



To: -  
Mailing Address

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Check your name and address on the mailing label. Make certain it is correct. If not, fill out this form and mail to the address below. If you wish to pay dues you may also use this form.

- Please accept my donation of \$10 for my dues for the 339<sup>th</sup> FGA. (Tax Exempt)
- Please add my name to the mailing list.
- Please send me \_\_\_\_\_ 339<sup>th</sup> Lapel Pins @ \$10 each plus \$2 additional for shipping  
(Number)
- Please send me \_\_\_\_\_ Caps @ \$17 each – includes shipping charges!  
(Number)
- Please mail me the 2006 Membership Roster (Mailing addresses).

**339<sup>th</sup> Fighter Group Association, Inc.**

C/o S. C. Ananian  
4 North Orchard Farms Ave.  
Simpsonville, SC 29681-4866, USA

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

First Middle Last

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (if you wish) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_